



**UNITED STATES ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY
REGION III
1650 Arch Street
Philadelphia, Pennsylvania 19103-2029**

September 16, 2013

Ms. Valerie Nottingham
NIH, B13/2S11
9000 Rockville Pike
Bethesda, MD 20892

Re: Final Environmental Impact Statement (FEIS) for National Institutes of Health Animal Center Draft Master Plan, Dickerson, Montgomery County, Maryland, July 2013
CEQ 20130236

Dear Ms. Nottingham:

In accordance with the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA), Section 309 of the Clean Air Act and the Council on Environmental Quality regulations implementing NEPA (40 CFR 1500-1508), the United States Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) has reviewed the Final Environmental Impact Statement (FEIS) for National Institutes of Health Animal Center Draft Master Plan. In our December 1, 2012 review letter of the Draft Environmental Impacts statement for the project, we rated the document as EC2 (Environmental Concerns/Insufficient Information.). Based on our review of the FEIS and the responses to our comments, we have the following remaining comments.

Since this facility will need an air permit, the level of detail provided in the EIS should clearly present the basis of the assumptions and data shown and must be as complete and accurate as possible. This pertains to data tables showing the area's air quality status and regulatory requirements. Summaries provided of key provisions in federal air requirements may distort or mischaracterize the requirements. Statements in the EIS on whether or not the facility will require an air permit or what kind of an air permit, should be made in consultation with the appropriate air agency or a qualifying statement should be included that indicates the air agency has the final authority regarding air permitting decisions. In addition, future NEPA documents should show the origination of authority and assumptions behind the numbers and calculations portrayed in greater detail.

Thank you for the opportunity to offer these comments. If you have any questions, please contact Barbara Okorn at (215)814-3330.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Jeffrey D. Lapp", with the word "for" written below it.

Jeffrey D. Lapp, Associate Director
Office of Environmental Programs